

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF  
POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

*Fourth Series*

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 544.

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 1874.

PRICE 1½d.

## A DRAW!

AN old friend of ours happens to possess a country residence amidst grounds more than ordinarily beautiful. There are lawns, trees, walks, gardens, and a sparkling rivulet from the hills pouring in cascades down a picturesque dell environed by shrubbery and wild-flowers. With a southern exposure, the sun shines bounteously on the scene. A kind of earthly paradise, you would say. What more could be wanted? Our friend, a little restless in his plans, was not satisfied. There was one thing he would like. A pond. Without that the place was deficient. If he could manage to make a pretty little pond, for the disposing of minnows and gold-fish, the thing would be complete. No sooner was this resolved on than it was accomplished, though at considerable expense. Circular in form, the pond was twenty feet in diameter and three feet deep, with a bed of fine river-gravel. A rill of water poured through it to keep it fresh. It had a margin of green turf all round, and in the middle there was a lovely miniature island for water-plants. As a convenient means of contemplating the beauty of the small sheet of water and its surroundings, and at the same time enjoying the air and sunshine, a rustic bower embellished with heliotropes was placed near at hand within view. It took a year to bring matters to perfection. Some fifty pounds had been expended. The grounds were at length unimprovable.

Our friend was not a naturalist. He was ignorant or forgetful of the attractive qualities of a settled piece of water, although no more than twenty feet in diameter. When the pond was put in working order, there sprung up suddenly an extraordinary demonstration of a certain department of animal life. A visitation of birds would have been enjoyable rather than otherwise, even at the sacrifice of the peas and the fruit. The plague was of a totally different kind. It was the plague of frogs and toads of all sorts and sizes. Yellow, brown, streaked, mottled, rough-skinned and smooth-skinned, big and little, hopping, crawl-

ing, or composedly resting to look about them. There they were. You saw them waddling along the gravel walks, or crossing the grass-plots. Hedges, ditches, and ploughed fields were no impediment to their eager locomotion. They were determined to get on. From all quarters, hill and dale, they made their appearance, as if under a powerful impulse of migration. It was evident, from the course they pursued, that the newly made pond was what they were bound for. Every one of them had somehow become acquainted with the fact of its existence. Intelligence regarding the pond had spread in all the frog and toad communities within a radius of several miles, and there was a general hurrying off in consequence. The small slip of water was speedily swarming. The minnows and gold-fish as authorised inhabitants were lost amidst a crowd of reptiles. Tadpoles were scooped out by the bucketful. Too late, our friend discovered that the pond was a *Draw*. Thoughtlessly he had brought on himself a heavy infliction.

What was to be done? The gardener, a canny Scot from the Howe of the Mearns, gave it as his opinion, though he was late in giving it, 'that, wherever there is a pond, there will be frogs. They come to it from far and near by instinct. It is their nature, sir. I doubt it is no use trying to keep them out.' Discouraged, our friend did not at once throw up the game. He bethought himself of surrounding the pond with a close wire-trellis, two feet high. The trellis was procured, and put in position. The expedient was unavailing. The frog and toad world kept travelling pondward the same as ever. On arriving in their march at the wire barricade, they were certainly disconcerted. They had not calculated on the obstruction. Yet, it did not altogether daunt them. Seating themselves all round, they looked wistfully through the trellis, and considered what steps should be taken to gain access to the glistening pool, the object of their longing desires. Some few, weakly and discouraged, after a time turned their backs in despair. Others more adventurous, maintained the siege, and like a forlorn-hope,

clambered up the trellis—no easy thing to do—reached the summit, and with, as we may suppose, a thrill of triumph, dashed into the pond. According to last accounts, our friend is almost at his wits' end. The *Batrachia*, in their various genera and species, have successfully baffled him. 'Wherever there is a pond, there will be frogs.' He now knows the force of this piece of information in natural history, and wishes he had known it, or remembered it sooner. The conclusion he is likely to arrive at, is, that the only way of getting rid of the frogs is, to extinguish the pond!

We have described these whimsical experiences in creating what proved a Draw for a certain variety of vermin, not without a hope of possibly suggesting reflections on a point in social economy which seems to be generally neglected. We mean the ever-extending practice of making large towns a harbourage and place of charitable succour to masses of people who, lost to a sense of self-dependence, throw themselves on the bounty of others. In point of fact, every city is made a Draw. The refuge is ready to hand, and so are benefactions, of various kinds, but medical charities in particular. At one time, not beyond remembrance, the principle inculcated was the necessity of working to secure the ordinary comforts of life. The young were told to be industrious, to strive to push on in the world, to endeavour to be self-supporting; they were reminded of the old saying, that 'the hand of the diligent maketh rich.' Franklin, it may be recollected, quotes as the result of his own early struggles: 'Seest thou a man diligent in his calling, he shall stand before kings.' That would now be considered a very old-fashioned doctrine. The modern view of things is, not to make any great effort to advance in the line of life you adopt; not to strive or compete; not for a moment to think of working hard, or getting an inch before the least skilled of your fellows. On the contrary, you are just to labour as little as you decently can; to insist on being at your work not above eight hours a day; to have as many holidays or half-holidays as possible; to take matters easily; to live well, and save nothing. If you are ill, never think of paying for a doctor. Trust to hospitals and dispensaries, to which, of course, you will have more sense than ever subscribe a single halfpenny. Keep in mind there are numbers of silly wealthy people, who will somehow look after you and your family when anything like difficulties arise.

If the bulk of the general population are not told thus plainly out in so many words, they can infer that such is meant, through the heedless proceedings of philanthropically disposed societies and individuals, who as much as say: 'Be half-idle, and we will take the consequences.' Are the results of this new gospel not visible in the condition of every populous city? Idleness and misexpenditure under the name of recreation. Self-instruction neglected, notwithstanding the numerous opportunities offered for mental im-

provement. The teachings of history and political economy hooted down as absurd. Houses in a semi-ruined, or at least degraded state, crammed, not with helpless paupers, broken down by unavoidable misfortune, who should invite compassion—but with the idle, the dissolute, the habitually dependent on all sorts of benevolences! For these, the town, with its obscure and miscellaneous dens, which ought not to be in existence, is a mighty Draw. They have flocked to it, and huddled themselves into it, by as sure an instinct as that which attracted the frogs to the pond.

The mightiest of all our civic Draws is the metropolis, with its prodigious population of three millions and a half. How many fall within the succour of the poor-law administration, we do not stop to inquire. The fact that seems most startling is, that 'eight hundred thousand individuals, or about one in four of the population, apply annually to the hospitals and the dispensaries for relief.'\* One in four, in the wealthiest city in the world, asking and getting medicine and medical advice for nothing! If anything could open the eyes of the public to the folly of countenancing a gigantic system of demoralisation in the name of charity, this should. It would be interesting to see an analysis of the various classes of persons who throw themselves on this species of extravagant benevolence. What are their means of subsistence, in what kind of houses do they dwell, how do they dress, and spend their money? We can contribute a fact towards the inquiry. In the newspaper obituaries, are constantly seen notices of deaths in the public infirmaries, which notices have of course been paid for by relatives of the deceased. That is to say, there are people of good means so shabby as to let their relations die in an hospital supported by voluntary contribution.

It can scarcely be called a wholesome social system, when one part of the community takes in hand to pet, flatter, and coddle the other. Yet, that is pretty much what we have come to. So strongly has the propriety of pampering got hold of the public mind, that the attempt to raise any objection to the process would probably be as unpopular as futile. Benevolent institutions once set on foot, and popularised, do not vanish at a bidding. Some time ago, a chief magistrate in a large town attempted the very moderate reform of consolidating charities and lessening their number. For civility's sake, the design was applauded, but it proved a failure. There were vested interests in the way. Each organisation had its friends, supporters, managers; so, after a due amount of inquiry and talk, the project was dropped. The respective organisations, though often differing only a shade from each other, remain undisturbed, each with its collecting-book as usual. In such matters prescriptive pecuniary

\* See an article on the Medical Charities of London, in the *Quarterly Review* for April: we commend it to the perusal of our readers.

interests are not alone accountable. Short-sighted crotchets are seriously concerned. One man has a craze for distributing bread and soup, another for giving away quantities of coal. These excellent persons do not perceive that, while possibly doing a little good, they are injuriously strengthening the attractions held out to the recklessly dependent classes. The wholesale mischief outdoes the individual benefit. Every fresh centre of gratuitous distribution is an additional Draw. And so, big towns swarm with an increasing shoal of the parasitic and demoralised, till every hole and corner is choked, and they become a general oppression and terror.

Police judges—the cleverest among them—are incompetent to deal with beings so unruly, and regardless of either admonition or punishment. The evil is done, and it is not the function, nor in the power of judges to undo it. Sabbath bells are ringing. Magistrates are gravely walking in their official robes to church. Happy land, where all is so proper and decorous! There is not a member of that ceremonious procession who could not pitch a penny-piece into lanes little better than the regions of heathendom, and where, at this instant, all laws and regulations to the contrary, there prevail scenes of foul revelry and disorder. Imprisonment! The very prison, as now constituted, is a Draw. It gives bed, board, washing, and doctoring, free of care or expense. A short retirement now and then is agreeable. Three months not objected to. ‘Do not be lenient with me, sir,’ said a middle-aged woman, lately addressing a police-judge when he was about to pass sentence on her for being disorderly. ‘Give me a good long imprisonment. I like the prison. It does me good!’ There is such a thing as being below a sense of shame or degradation:

Let them prate about decorum  
Who have characters to lose!

Does society, in this nineteenth century of ours, imagine it is without blame in complacently seeing all this growing up and flourishing under a multiplicity of attractions and encouragements?

Some few years ago, in an extra paroxysm of philanthropy, there was a rage for getting up what were called Nightly Shelters—places where some food, warmth, and a night's lodging could be had for nothing. It was a benevolent but mistaken idea, for it did not take into account the dependent quality in human nature. Towns within twenty miles or so of each other were provided with Shelters. As if by magic, every Shelter was a Draw. The whole of tramping was on the move. Groups of men, wives, and children took a sudden fancy for travelling. Their pedestrian excursions were delightful. All they had to do, to enjoy air, exercise, and a pleasant variety, was to circulate from town to town, get free quarters with food every evening—Saturday to Monday two evenings, with some intermediate indulgence—and thus contentedly make their rounds at the public expense. The thing was obviously too bad to last. Subscribers took the alarm. They saw, that in humanely trying to succour a few homeless beings, they were actually creating vagrants by the hundred—turning crowds of men, women, and children into a kind of gipsies. Without saying much about the failure of the project, the Shelters were shut up. The Draw was stopped.

Walker, a man of shrewd observation, with a knowledge of London character, says in his work, *The Original*, that if you were to lay down on their sides a row of empty sugar-hogsheads in Whitechapel, the chances are that each hoghead within four-and-twenty hours would be the dwelling of a family. Perhaps that was taking an extreme view of the proneness to nestle in quarters open for intrusion. But it is true in the main. If you wish to have frogs, make a pond. If you wish to have about you a dissolute helpless class of beings, give them house-room. They will not be nice as to accommodation. The absence of comfort is compensated by drams or beer—it is all one. Begging, or a trifling job now and then, with a wild scramble for any public charities that may be going, will suffice. At the worst, by keeping for a few years within a determinate parish, the rates and the Workhouse are an inheritance legally secured.

It seems to matter little whether cities are built to endure for hundreds of years, or only for a century. The tall black buildings of Edinburgh, and the slender brick edifices in the meaner parts of London, alike drift into rookeries of disease, crime, and disorder. Everywhere there are people to buy or lease half-ruinous tenements with a view to let them out in small portions. Some one has graphically styled them ‘ruins’ lords.’ They are the perpetuators of old houses which from public policy it would be merciful to sweep away. Only those who have visited the interiors of these dismal abodes, can form an opinion of their degradation. We have known a family inhabiting a dungeon without a window, and as dark as midnight; and have seen a single apartment divided into two for separate families by a partition of brown paper. It will perhaps be counselled, erect proper dwellings for this abject order of inhabitants. No one in his senses would do so. Nothing but the constant vigilance of a ruins’ lord can extort a farthing of rent, or prevent doors, window-shutters, and even flooring, from being torn up for firewood. We speak not here of the thrifty and well-disposed among the manual-labouring classes. Where not spoiled by petting or tutelage, and left to their own ingenuity, they are able to build or buy houses for themselves; and this they are doing on a comprehensive scale when land is available. Interference with movements of this nature would only do harm. That which clearly calls for reprobation, is the accumulation of downright wretchedness, by encouraging idleness and misexpenditure, and mistakingly holding out the inducement of numerous charities, or the more palpable attraction of a degraded and unwholesome species of dwellings.

Substantially, these dismal habitations, which we faintly picture, constitute an altogether irresistible Draw. The needy and able-bodied improvident flock to them from all quarters; while for those on the spot, whose fancy, according to modern maxims, is to work as little and drink as much as possible, they present a convenient receptacle in which they may hide themselves from public scrutiny. The Improvement Acts of Glasgow and Edinburgh, recently referred to by Mr Kay-Shuttleworth in the House of Commons, proceeded on a full understanding of the necessity of destroying such odious haunts; and are acknowledged to be successful so far as they go. But for clamorous opposition, the success would have been considerably greater. Better

proof of the propriety of clearing away semi-ruinous resorts could scarcely be advanced. If you wish to banish frogs, extinguish your pond—if to be freed from a host of parasitic and dissolute idlers, cease to attract them or give them harbourage.

W. C.

### COLOUR IN ANIMALS.

THE variety of colouring in animal life is one of the marvels of nature, only now beginning to be studied scientifically. It is vain to say that an animal is beautiful, either in symmetry or diversity of colour, in order to please the human eye. Fishes in the depths of the Indian seas, where no human eye can see them, possess the most gorgeous tints. One thing is remarkable: birds, fishes, and insects alone possess the metallic colouring; whilst plants and zoophytes are without reflecting shades. The mollusca take a middle path with their hue of mother-of-pearl. What is the reason of these arrangements in the animal kingdom? It is a question which cannot be satisfactorily answered; but some observations have been made which throw light on the subject. One is, that among animals, the part of the body turned towards the earth is always paler than that which is uppermost. The action of light is here apparent. Fishes which live on the side, as the sole and turbot, have the left side, which answers to the back, of a dark tint; whilst the other side is white. It may be noticed that birds which fly, as it were, bathed in light do not offer the strong contrast of tone between the upper and lower side. Beetles, wasps, and flies have the metallic colouring of blue and green, possess rings equally dark all round the body; and the wings of many butterflies are as beautifully feathered below as above.

On the other hand, mollusca which live in an almost closed shell, like the oyster, are nearly colourless; the larvæ of insects found in the ground or in wood have the same whiteness, as well as all intestinal worms shut up in obscurity. Some insects whose life is spent in darkness keep this appearance all their lives; such as the curious little beetles inhabiting the inaccessible crevasses of snowy mountains, in whose depths they are hidden. They seem to fly from light as from death, and are only found at certain seasons, when they crawl on the flooring of the caves like larvæ, without eyes, which would be useless in the retreats where they usually dwell.

This relation between colouring and light is very evident in the beings which inhabit the earth and the air; those are the most brilliant which are exposed to the sun; those of the tropics are brighter than in the regions around the North Pole, and the diurnal species than the nocturnal; but the same law does not apparently belong to the inhabitants of the sea, which are of a richer shade where the light is more tempered. The most dazzling corals are those which hang under the natural cornices of the rocks and on the sides of submarine grottoes; while some kinds of fish which are

found on the shores as well as in depths requiring the drag-net, have a bright red purple in the latter regions, and an insignificant yellow brown in the former. Those who bring up gold-fish know well that to have them finely coloured, they must place them in a shaded vase, where aquatic plants hide them from the extreme solar heat. Under a hot July sun they lose their beauty.

The causes to which animal colouring is due are very various. Some living substances have it in themselves, owing to molecular arrangement, but usually this is not the case; the liveliest colours are not bound up with the tissues. Sometimes they arise from a phenomenon like that by which the soap-bubble shews its prismatic hues; sometimes there is a special matter called pigment which is united with the organic substance. Such is the brilliant paint, carmine, which is the pigment of the cochineal insect, and the red colour of blood, which may be collected in crystals, separate from the other particles to which it is united.

Even the powder not unknown to ladies of fashion is one of Nature's beautifying means. That which is left on the hands of the ruthless boy when he has caught a butterfly, is a common instance; but there are birds, such as the large white cockatoo, which leave a white powder on the hands. An African traveller speaks of his astonishment on a rainy day to see his hands reddened by the moist plumage of a bird he had just killed. The most ordinary way, however, in which the pigment is found is when it exists in the depths of the tissues, reduced to very fine particles, best seen under the microscope. When scattered, they scarcely influence the shade; but when close together, they are very perceptible. This explains the colour of the negro: under the very delicate layer of skin which is raised by a slight burn there may be seen abundance of brown pigment in the black man. It is quite superficial, for the skin differs only from that of the European in tone; it wants the exquisite transparency of fair races. Among these, the colours which impress the eye do not come from a flat surface, but from the different depths of layers in the flesh. Hence the variety of rose and lily tints according as the blood circulates more or less freely; hence the blue veins, which give a false appearance, because the blood is red; but the skin thus dyes the deep tones which lie beneath it; tattooing with Indian ink is blue, blue eyes owe their shade to the brown pigment which lines the other side of the iris, and the muscles seen under the skin produce the bluish tone well known to painters.

The chemical nature of pigment is little known; the sun evidently favours its development in red patches. Age takes it away from the hair when it turns white, the colouring-matter giving place to very small air-bubbles. The brilliant white of feathers is due to the air which fills them. Age, and domestic habits exchanged for a wild state, alter the appearance of many birds and animals; in some species the feathers and fur grow white every year before falling off and being renewed; as in the ermine, in spring the fur which is so valued assumes a yellow hue, and after a few months, becomes white before winter.

It would, however, be an error to suppose that

all  
the  
arise  
ists  
the  
diam  
brea  
micr  
shad  
They  
subst  
is, ho  
of th  
offers  
place  
size,  
ance,  
they  
cock  
distan  
descri  
pariso  
give  
do th  
throug  
iris t  
alone  
birds  
a feat  
bismu  
variab  
feathe  
a beau  
The  
the hu  
butter  
which  
the ti  
forms.  
fying  
the ph  
howev  
scale.  
colour  
violet  
the bu  
green t  
able li  
Morph  
these l  
careful  
made  
uncom  
in a be  
to one  
wings  
in the  
Ther  
hues of  
shades  
bismut  
opal.  
it is on  
shad or  
with th  
the scal  
pearls.  
extreme  
the skin  
like so  
the fles



all the exquisite metallic shades which diaper the feathers of birds and the wings of butterflies arise from pigments; it was a dream of the alchemists to try to extract them. Their sole cause is the play of light, fugitive as the sparkles of the diamond. When the beautiful feathers on the breast of a humming-bird are examined under the microscope, it is astonishing to see none of the shades the mystery of which you would penetrate. They are simply made of a dark-brown opaque substance not unlike those of a black duck. There is, however, a remarkable arrangement; the barb of the feather, instead of being a fringed stem, offers a series of small squares of horny substance placed point to point. These plates, of infinitesimal size, are extremely thin, brown, and, to all appearance, exactly alike, whatever may be the reflection they give. The brilliant large feathers of the peacock are the same; the plates are only at a greater distance, and of less brightness. They have been described as so many little mirrors, but that comparison is not correct, for then they would only give back light without colouring it. Neither do they act by decomposing the rays which pass through them, for then they would not lose their iris tints under the microscope. It is to metals alone that the metallic plumage of the humming-birds can be compared; the effects of the plates in a feather are like tempered steel or crystallised bismuth. Certain specimens emit colours very variable under different angles, the same scarlet feather becoming, when turned to ninety degrees, a beautiful emerald green.

The same process which nature has followed in the humming-bird is also found in the wing of the butterfly. It is covered with microscopic scales, which play the part of the feather, arranged like the tiles of a house, and taking the most elegant forms. They also lose their colour under magnifying power, and the quality of reflection shews that the phenomena are the same as in feathers. There is, however, a difference in the extent of the chromatic scale. Whilst the humming-bird partakes in its colours of the whole of the spectrum from the violet to the red, passing through green, those of the butterfly prefer the more refrangible ones from green to violet, passing through blue. The admirable lilac shade of the *Morpho menelas* and the *Morpho cypris* is well known, and the wings of these butterflies have been used by the jewellers, carefully laid under a thin plate of mica, and made into ornaments. A bright green is not uncommon, but the metallic red is rare, excepting in a beautiful butterfly of Madagascar, closely allied to one found in India and Ceylon. The latter has wings of a velvet black with brilliant green spots; in the former, these give place to a mark of fiery red.

There is the same difference between the metallic hues of creatures endowed with flight and the iris shades of fishes, that there is between crystallised bismuth and the soft reflections of the changing opal. To have an idea of the richness of the fish, it is only necessary to see a net landed filled with shad or other bright fish. It is one immense opal, with the same transparency of shade seen through the scales, which afford the only means of imitating pearls. It is due, however, not to the scales, but to extremely thin layers lying below the scales under the skin and round the blood-vessels, which look like so many threads of silver running through the flesh. Réaumur first noticed and described

them; sometimes their form is as regular as that of a crystal, and of infinitesimal size and thickness. The art of the makers of false pearls is to collect these plates in a mass from the fish, and make a paste of them with the addition of glue, which is pompously named 'Eastern Essence.' This is put inside glass beads, and gives them the native whiteness of pearls.

Many observations have been made lately by our naturalists as to the defence which colour supplies to animals: hares, rabbits, stags, and goats possess the most favourable shade for concealing them in the depths of the forest or in the fields. It is well known that when the Volunteer corps were enrolled, and the most suitable colour for the riflemen was discussed, it was supposed to be green. Soldiers dressed in different shades were placed in woods and plains, to try which offered the best concealment. Contrary to expectation, that which escaped the eyes of the enemy was not green, but the fawn colour of the doe. Among hunting quadrupeds, such as the tiger, the leopard, the jaguar, the panther, there is a shade of skin which man has always been anxious to appropriate for his own use. The old Egyptian tombs have paintings of the negroes of Sudan, their loins girt with the fine yellow skins for which there is still a great sale. All the birds which prey upon the smaller tribes, and fishes like the shark, are clothed in dead colours, so as to be the least seen by their victims.

There is an animal which, for two thousand years, has excited the curiosity and superstition of man by its change of colour—that is, the chameleon. No reasonable observation was ever made upon it, until Perrault instituted some experiments in the seventeenth century. He observed that the animal became pale at night, and took a deeper colour when in the sun, or when it was teased; whilst the idea that it took its colour from surrounding objects was simply fabulous. He wrapped it in different kinds of cloth, and once only did it become paler when in white. Its colours were very limited, varying from gray to green and greenish brown.

Little more than this is known in the present day: under our skies it soon loses its intensity of colour. Beneath the African sun, its livery is incessantly changing; sometimes a row of large patches appears on the sides, or the skin is spotted like a trout, the spots turning to the size of a pin's head. At other times, the figures are light on a brown ground, which a moment before were brown on a light ground, and these last during the day. A naturalist speaks of two chameleons which were tied together on a boat in the Nile, with sufficient length of string to run about, and so always submissive to the same influences of light, &c. They offered a contrast of colour, though to a certain degree alike; but when they slept under the straw chair which they chose for their domicile, they were exactly of the same shade during the hours of rest—a fine sea-green that never changed. The skin rested, as did the brain, so that it seemed probable that central activity, thought, will, or whatever name is given, has some effect in the change of colour. The probability is, that as they become pale, the pigment does not leave the skin, but that it is collected in spheres too small to affect our retina, which will be impressed by the same quantity of pigment when more extended.

It is undoubtedly the nerves which connect the brain with organs where the pigment is retained. By cutting a nerve, the colouring-matter is paralysed in that portion of the skin through which the nerve passes, just as a muscle is isolated by the section of its nerve. If this operation be performed on a turbot when in a dark state, and thrown into a sandy bottom, the whole body grows paler, excepting the part which cannot receive cerebral influence. The nerves have, in general, a very simple and regular distribution: if two or three of these are cut in the body of the fish, a black transversal band following the course of the nerve will be seen; whilst, if the nerve which animates the head is thus treated, the turbot growing paler on the sand, keeps a kind of black mask, which has a very curious effect.

These marks will remain for many weeks, and what may be called paralysis of colour has been remarked in consequence of illness or accident. Such was seen in the head of a large turbot, the body being of a different colour. It was watched, and died after a few days, evidently of some injury which it had received. The subject offers a field of immense inquiry: the chemical and physical study of pigments, the conditions which regulate their appearance, their intensity, and variations under certain influences; the want of them in albinos, and the exaggerated development in other forms of disease. To Mr Darwin, in England, and to M. Ponchet, in France, the subject is indebted for much research, which will no doubt be continued as occasion offers.

## THE BEST OF HUSBANDS

### CHAPTER XXXII.—THE SECRET WITNESS.

'THAT'S it, madam, nothing less,' observed Blake, with brutal coolness, after a short pause, during which Maggie for the first time withdrew her eyes from his, and fixed them on the ground.

'Tis just murder that this excellent husband of yours has committed; and as though even that were not enough, the man he has killed was his own brother. Do you hear that?'

'I hear you say so,' was Maggie's answer, delivered in such unmoved tones that they surprised herself. Her weakness had been but momentary, and now that she was face to face with the worst, she felt the courage of despair.

'You'd be game to the last, I knew,' continued Blake, with a sort of grudging admiration; 'or it may be that, so far as I have gone as yet, you may think me a liar. One of that trade, however, it ought to strike you, would not have told you so improbable a story—would have stuck to something a little less strong, but more like truth.'

It did so strike her; and though she did not believe the fact—she would as easily have been persuaded that the sun was black, as that John Milbank was a murderer—she did believe that Dennis Blake was stating what he deemed was true. Remembering what her last reply had cost her, she answered him by a haughty gesture expressive of incredulity and contempt.

'Well, it is something that one can get you to

listen,' continued the other dryly; 'that you don't fly out, as some fools would in your case, into a passion and clamour that would ruin all. I always thought you a sensible woman, except as regarded Master Dick—There, there; I'll say no more about that, then'—for Maggie had risen with such a look of rage and scorn upon her face, as bade him pause—but will proceed to the proof at once.—I no more thought at first, as I have said, of anything more serious than a quarrel having happened between the two brothers, than you did, notwithstanding it was clear to me John had some good cause for concealing that Richard had returned to him that night; and even when the lost man did not turn up, I took the other's word for granted, that he had left the town, notwithstanding the private reasons I had for holding his departure to be unlikely. If, indeed, I had had any ground of suspicion of your husband, I should have worked upon it then, and much more, you may be sure, after I got this'—he moved a lock of dark hair aside, that hung over his forehead, and shewed a deep white scar. 'If I could have hung him *then*, by Heaven! I would have done it, without ransom! To see him swing, would have been dearer to me than a mountain of gold!' The vehemence and passion with which Blake pursued this topic, contrasting, as they did, with the calculating coldness he had hitherto displayed, were most remarkable, and shewed but too well that gain was not the only object, nor perhaps even the chief one, that he had in view. 'To think that for speaking lightly of a girl like you, a man should be so mauled as this'—here he snarled like the cur he was, and shewed a row of teeth with which art had supplied him, in lieu of those which John's hit from the shoulder had destroyed—'a girl, who, if she was not the thing I called her, was something worse, and cast one brother off for another as easily as one changes shoes. To think, too, that the man who struck me—that miracle of virtue, and soul of honour, as folks deemed him, so sainted, that he could not listen to a broad jest, but must needs arrogate to himself the right of chastising him who uttered it—to think that this man, I say, was a felon, a murderer, whom I could have sent to jail and to the gallows, with a word! If I could have laid him dead, I would have done it, even then; but now—knowing what I do—I feel, aye, as though I could tear his heart out with my hands! You, you too'—he broke out with a fresh access of fury, and pointing at her with a trembling finger—'do you think I will spare *you*, any more than *him*, now my time has come?'

'Is this the proof that you have to shew me of my husband's guilt?' inquired Maggie coldly. 'At present, I only see the evidence of such malevolence and hate as would have sufficed to forge a proof.'

'It was not necessary to forge it, madam,' answered the other, with a bitter sneer, 'as I shall presently shew you. About that time—I am

speaking of eighteen months ago—I had my own misfortunes’—

‘Let me describe them,’ interposed Maggie, in the same clear voice she had used at the beginning of their interview. ‘You lost what little self-respect you had, and took to cheating your acquaintances at cards; you were turned out of the club, and reduced to beggary; I have seen you in the street, myself, in rags.’

‘I am not in rags, however, now, madam,’ continued Blake, who seemed to have repented of his recent outbreak of passion, and to have recovered his self-control; ‘and thanks to the knowledge I possess, and am about to communicate to you, I am not likely to be in rags in future.’ Your delicate reference to my late condition is, of course, meant to suggest that my testimony is not unimpeachable. That might be so, if it rested upon my word alone; but it does not. I was foolish to fly in a passion, from the mere remembrance of the past, when so much can be remedied; you were still more foolish to taunt me with my humiliations. Let us proceed with the main business. I was poor; I was reduced to such sore straits that—I own to you frankly—I would have stuck at nothing. In my palmy times, I had often feasted in this very room, and eaten and drunk—especially drunk—of the best; and while casting about me in London for a livelihood, it struck me that something could be got at Rosebank, which would never be missed by its present owner, while it would have put me in funds. I allude to the wine in your husband’s cellar’—he stopped a moment, as though to select his words, and then continued, in a harsh dry tone, as follows: ‘I had heard that John Milbank had bricked up that cellar on the very day that his brother left his roof—for what reason, I knew not, though I can guess it now; and hence, if I could only gain admission to the place, I might, it struck me, get all I wanted, without the risk of discovery. With this intention, I returned to Hilton some weeks ago. With the premises here, I was tolerably familiar; but before entering upon my project, I surveyed them with great particularity, taking care to select those times when your husband was at his office. Nothing would have been easier than to have removed the iron grating outside the cellar, but that would have been to have revealed the robbery—I am very plain-spoken, you see, madam, and call a spade a spade—and besides, it was my object to take all the contents of the place, which would have required several nights for their removal. On the whole, therefore, I judged it best to dig into the cellar from the toolhouse. The stock of wood for winter use was large, and would conceal my operations; the spade and pick were ready to my hands. My time was not valuable, and my gain was certain. It was altogether an excellent plan, and I worked it out to perfection. When I had nearly accomplished my purpose however, and drew near the cellar wall, my difficulties increased, since, once under the house, every blow of my pick was liable to be heard by those above; and though I took every precaution, even to removing the bricks one by one, this did in fact happen, for your husband was disturbed, and discovered me in the very act. You will ask then, madam, how it was that, having no particular liking for your humble servant, he should, under

such circumstances, have held his hand—that had once been so quick to avenge your fancied wrongs, or forborne to give me over to the tender mercies of the police. The reason of this was, that before he discovered me in the cellar, I had happened to discover Something there myself. It was not very much—only some clothes and some bones—Permit me to pour you out a glass of water.’

If she had been told at any time during the last two years that, under any possible circumstances, she could have been persuaded to take even so much as a glass of water from the hand of Dennis Blake, Maggie would have indignantly denied it; yet she took it now, and almost felt grateful to him for that trifling service. Her vital powers and her reason seemed to be alike deserting her, and that at the very moment when she most required resolution and decision.

‘The shock is severe, no doubt,’ continued her companion grimly, when the colour began once more to faintly tinge her cheek; ‘I felt it to be so myself, I do assure you, when that spectacle first met my gaze. To come at midnight, and in the very bowels of the earth, as it were, upon the body of an old acquaintance, lying doubtless on the very spot where he had met his death—it was at the foot of the stone steps’—Maggie held up her hand imploringly, for had she not beheld that very spot herself, with its dark stain on the stone floor, that she was now persuaded had been Richard’s blood!

‘I have no desire to distress you, madam, more than is absolutely necessary,’ resumed Blake coldly. ‘So long as you understand the fact, the details may well be spared. I will not even mention the poor victim’s name, whose remains lie at this moment exactly as I have described, beneath this very room—under our very feet! The verification of my statement—or its disproof—is easy; but I will suppose that you accept it. There is no more choice for you, indeed, than there was for your husband himself when he found me yonder’—he pointed with his finger downward—‘in possession of his ghastly secret. I think there was a moment when he thought to kill me also, and thereby conceal the evidence of his first crime by a second; but I was armed; or perhaps he had already had enough of blood-shedding. “I know who this was, and by whose hand he came by his end,” said I. He made no effort to deny it, but stood speechless, overwhelmed with remorse and terror. I was frightened myself, I own, and eager enough to get to the upper air. “Go first,” said I (for I was not so foolish as to let him come behind me); and he obeyed me like a child. When we got to the toolhouse, I put the wood back over the hole with my own hands, for he seemed quite helpless, and gazed at me like one walking in his sleep. When I told him, however, by way of comfort, how fortunate it was that an old acquaintance like myself, who understood the relations between him and his brother, and could make allowance for great provocation, had discovered his secret, since it would remain quite safely in my hands—upon certain equitable conditions—he seemed to recover himself a little, and be inclined to listen to reason. On the other hand, it was foolish in him, and a mere waste of breath, to endeavour to explain to me that the whole affair had happened by accident. That might have been the case or not; if it was so, it was no doubt a matter for his private satisfaction;

but so far as I was concerned (as I pointed out to him), it could not make one half-pennyworth of difference in my pecuniary demands. Again, it was still more foolish in him—the man who had struck me down in the open street—to attempt to appeal to my compassion. I refer to it, however, for two reasons: first, because his stooping to such a humiliation will bring home to you more than any words of mine the fact that he lay—and lies—completely in my power; and secondly, as a guide for your own proceedings. You have heard of a heart of stone; but stone may be worn away, they say, by water-drops, and therefore, perhaps, by woman's tears. My heart is made of sterner stuff. Besides, I hate you both, and would not spare you a single turn of the rack—so long as it kept life in you.

'Monster! what is it you demand?' asked Maggie hoarsely.

'Money! A round sum down. So much paid quarterly—and to the very day. It will not beggar you; you will not go about in rags, as I have done; but you will be poor, and I shall be rich. Money!'

'I will not give you one farthing, though it were to save your soul.' She had risen from her chair, and stood confronting him with pale resolute face and unshrinking eye. 'Thief, by your own admission; coward, by your presence here; liar, by the story you have fabricated against my husband's honour, I will give you nothing—nothing! I defy you!'

'O ho, madam, so you guessed it from the first, did you,' answered he, 'and made up your mind to fight it out? Have you forgotten, then, what I told you a week ago, that I have in my possession—I have it here—the proof, the damning proof of what I have told you, in your husband's own handwriting? Do you suppose that I trusted to his bare word? No, no. Here it is, in black and white—his own admission.'

'Let me look at it.'

She had moved towards him, and he stepped back towards the curtained window, to avoid her. 'Gently, gently. Keep your distance, madam. I am not going to let your nimble fingers touch a document that is worth to me five thousand pounds at least.'

'It is worth nothing: I do not believe in its existence. It is just as likely as not to be blank paper, and all this wicked talk a scheme to extort money from a defenceless woman. Let me see it, I say.'

'You shall see it, but at safe distance,' replied Blake, still retiring before her.

'That means, it is a forgery,' answered Maggie boldly.

'Forgery or not, madam, it shall never leave my—'

Here the curtains opened behind the speaker, a strong arm stretched over his shoulder, and plucked the paper from his grasp; he turned round with the cry of a wild beast, and found himself face to face, not with John Milbank, as his fears foreboded, but with the inspector of police!

'I will shew the document to the lady myself,' said Mr Brain.

#### CHAPTER XXXIII.—CHECKMATED.

It would have been difficult for the most skilful of physiognomists to detect the chief among the various passions that convulsed the countenance

of Dennis Blake, on finding himself disarmed of the weapon wherewith he had proposed to win so much. For an instant, he glared savagely at the inspector, as though resolved, at all hazards, to regain the document of which he had been so unceremoniously dispossessed; but there was such an unmistakable look of power in the well-built frame of his opponent, as he stood with his hand behind him, and the paper in it, and such an obvious 'You had better not' in his resolute features, that he seemed to abandon that idea as hopeless. But the rage in his face remained no less vehement for being baffled; and mingled with it was a fear that blanched even his dusky cheek. Irresolution, too, had as evidently seized him, as he glanced from one to the other of his two companions, uncertain to which side to attach himself, labouring between the slender hope of yet securing his object, or the immediate gratification of revenge. The former consideration seemed at last to prevail with him, for, after a full minute of troubled thought, he thus broke silence:

'I hope, Mr Inspector, that you know the world too well, to have taken all that I have been saying to Mrs Milbank here, for granted. I confess, I was putting the screw on a little more tightly than the circumstances warranted, but that would have been explained all in good time. It is a case, I do assure you, which does not require your intervention at all. Though, I will answer for it, that you shall not have cause to regret your loss of time here. The little affair between myself and this lady may be very well settled out of court, but at the same time, you shall occupy the post of arbitrator—so far as the fee goes—and it shall be a large one.'

Mr Brain did not reply, but turned an eye interrogatively towards Maggie, keeping the other, as it were, on guard upon his interlocutor.

'For my part,' answered Maggie resolutely, 'I wish to enter into no terms whatever with this man, whom I know to be a liar and a villain. I believe no word of what he has been telling me; but that he has founded his whole story upon some scandalous rumour, taking advantage of which, and of my unprotected and miserable condition, he has sought to extort money from me. That paper, I say again, if it be anything—if it be not a mere sham and pretence, with which to crown his infamous scheme—is but a forgery of my poor husband's handwriting, and will be proved so in any court of justice.'

'Have I, then, your permission to read it, madam?' inquired the inspector.

There was a melancholy gravity in his face that to Maggie's eye foreboded ill. There had been points in that long act of accusation to which they had both been listening, that had struck home with something of conviction even to her heart—though it did not waver even now in its allegiance to her husband; her own answers, specially framed though they had been to meet the ears of a third person, had not always, she was conscious, been such as to throw doubt upon Blake's story, and it might well be that the very man she had invoked for her protection was, in spite of himself, already committed to the other side. Still, all the more reason was there to put entire trust in that little weapon, the time for using which had now arrived; and to give proof of her confidence in John's innocence, by daring all.



'Read it, Mr Brain, by all means,' cried she, 'and read it aloud. Whatever it may say to my husband's prejudice, will be false, I know, as the knave who has brought it hither. I have nothing to fear from it, nor, thanks to your presence here, from him.'

'Are you mad, woman?—Stop, stop, sir!' broke in Blake, with vehemence, and stretching a hand out, in his excitement, that unintentionally struck against the inspector's chest. The next moment, he was staggering to the other end of the parlour, half-stunned by a buffet from that official's fist.

'Hands off!' exclaimed Mr Brain, in a warning voice. 'I have enough against you already, without your adding assault and battery to the list of your offences.—It is, as you say, madam, very well that we arranged this little plan together beforehand—that I am here to protect you from the violence of a scoundrel who would stick at nothing.'

In spite of this rebuff and denunciation, Dennis Blake once more lifted up his voice in earnest appeal to Maggie. 'I adjure you, madam, to forbid this man to read that paper, or you will repent it to your dying day.'

'Read it, Mr Brain,' repeated Maggie steadily, 'and aloud, if you will be so good.'

'That's easier said than done, ma'am,' cried the inspector, who had already unfolded the document. 'Why, this villain, this extortioner, has been trading upon absolutely *nothing*! Such a specimen of audacity, I have never beheld, in all my professional experience! Why, the paper is *blank*!'

'Blank!' echoed Maggie, in a tone of wonder, that needed all her self-command to counterfeit: her heart was as overpowered with gratitude as though a miracle had interfered in her husband's favour. The weapon, then, to which she had trusted had *not* failed her—the virtues of her father's darling invention had been proved indeed, in a manner, and with a result, that his wildest fancy could never have pictured. How little, too, could John have thought, when he flattered the old man's whim, and helped to make it a reality, that it should one day be the instrument of his own safety, and of his enemy's confusion!

'Blank!' repeated Blake, in a frenzy. 'Why, this is witchcraft, devilry! Blank! Why, I have read it every day since the night in which I forced his fingers to write it! Blank! Why, you have changed it yourself. You are in the same boat with this woman and her husband; she has bribed you. Give it me back, give it me back, I say!'

In the fury of his disappointment and despair, he cast himself upon the inspector like a tiger, and strove to drag him to the ground. Some years ago, it would have gone hard with the man whom he had thus grappled; but his constitution, which had seemed proof against drink and riot, had, as sometimes happens, without declension, utterly given way, so that he was but the shell and framework of the man he had been. In two minutes from the commencement of the struggle, it was virtually over; and presently there was a sharp click, and Dennis Blake was sitting breathless in a chair, with a pair of handcuffs round his trembling wrists.

'If you was as strong as you are vicious,' remarked the inspector, taking out his handkerchief, and mopping his forehead, 'you would be a very

ugly customer indeed. I could have given you a tap with my truncheon, mind you; but that would have been to rob the gallows of its rights.'

'She has bribed you,' gasped Blake hoarsely.

'Ah, with the money that she should have given you, I suppose,' chuckled Mr Brain, regarding his prisoner with much complacency. 'You are—you really *are* a specimen, in the way of scoundrels: quite perfection, upon my life.'

'I tell you, this is false imprisonment, and you shall pay for it,' continued the other, choked as much with rage as want of breath. 'It is on that woman's wrists—as accessory after the fact to a murder; I have said so, and I can prove it—and not on mine, that you should put these things.' He held up the manacles as he spoke, and shook them at her in impotent malice.—'Do you think your husband will escape my vengeance, through this device, you jilt, you trickster?—'

'Gently, gently,' broke in the inspector sternly. 'No hard words to any lady in my presence, or I'll gag you!'

'I say that John Milbank has committed murder,' continued Blake excitedly—the murder of his own brother Richard, and that that woman knows it. I accuse her of being his confederate, and I charge you, inspector, to do your duty, without fear or favour, and arrest her as such!'

'I should think you were a sort of gentleman whose sense of duty is most uncommon powerful!' observed Mr Brain, leaning his head aside, and scratching it in the excess of his moral approbation. 'I don't wonder that the notion of another person's neglect of it should fill your breast with virtuous indignation; not at all. The *very* finest specimen, upon my honour, of impudence; no imitation, but the genuine scoundrel, with the true ring about him: brass, from skin to skin.'

'I don't care what you say of me—I don't care what you do to me,' gasped the wretched man, 'only take the charge. I say it's murder, and I can prove it. You're a policeman, and you have no choice but to obey the law.'

'I am a policeman, as you say, Mr Dennis Blake,' observed Mr Brain coolly, 'though, since I am an inspector, it would have been more civil to give me my title; and, as a policeman, I will tell you how this case strikes me. I have heard your story with my own ears; and some of it I believe, especially that part of it where you acknowledged that you had broken into this house with felonious intentions. I happened to have discovered that underground passage, which, it seems, was your own handiwork, myself, and have, by means of it, explored the cellar. There are no "dead men" there, unless it's an empty bottle or two, which are sometimes called so, nor, in my opinion, have there ever been such.'

'It has been taken away, then, and buried elsewhere,' put in the other doggedly. 'I saw it lying by the stone steps, with my own eyes!'

'You have said that already, Dennis Blake; but when you said it last, you promised that there was the proof to follow. Do you call this white sheet of paper a proof of murder? It looks to me more like a proof of innocence!'

'It bore John Milbank's confession, the last time I looked at it,' cried the other vehemently. 'You have changed it for another. I say again, this woman has bribed you!'

'That statement is slander,' observed Mr Brain

quietly, 'and uttered in the presence of a witness. However, let me proceed with the matter in hand, which you will find to be still more serious. The tale you tell is a monstrous one, and has evidently been framed to fit the circumstances, which, again (at least the chief of them), are of your own making. By your own confession, you broke into the house in quite an unexampled manner. Having done so, and been caught, as you say, in the very act, and foreseeing punishment, although deferred, inevitable, you trump up this strange story. What motive induced Mr Milbank to spare you at the time, of course I cannot guess, but you have obviously taken advantage of that fact, to give the impression that he was afraid of you. The disappearance of his brother, and the malicious rumours prevalent in the town concerning it, have supplied you with materials for this plot, while his own unexplained absence from home suggested the time for the execution of it. You came here expecting to find Mrs Milbank alone, broken down by her heavy calamity, and a prey to nervous fears—a victim in all respects suitable for your infamous purpose. Instead of that, I am glad to say, you found a sensible and courageous woman, who had already placed her case in the proper hands. I arrest you, Dennis Blake, upon two charges: first, for the commission of the burglary, to which you have yourself confessed; and secondly, for an attempt to extort money, which I can speak to from the evidence of my own eyes and ears.'

#### LITTLE GREAT MEN.

It is a remarkable thing that some of the greatest men in history have been of small stature. Certainly, from all experience, height of person has no influence on the mental faculties. The chances seem to be that smallness of size, in fact, at times, a little lameness, is advantageous. The reason for this is tolerably plain. Tall and robust men are apt to devote themselves, or at least to derive so much enjoyment from boisterous pursuits, as to be rather indifferent to any speciality in mental culture. Men of small stature, and perhaps weak health, are, on the contrary, driven to mental occupation. Studying hard in their several vocations, they rise to distinction. A comforting reflection this for young men who have the misfortune to labour under personal infirmities. We propose to give a few notable examples of 'little great men.'

William of Malmesbury has preserved the tradition, that one of the greatest of our early English kings, Edgar the Pacific, was 'extremely small both in stature and in bulk.' William declared it to be an opinion amongst the English in his own day (that is, two centuries later than Edgar's reign), that 'no king either of his own or earlier times in England could be justly and fairly compared to Edgar.'

The next king of the English whose might can be at all compared with Edgar's was the Danish Cnut; his kingdom, indeed, had a far wider range. It is curious that this great warrior and legislator was also a singularly small man. William of Malmesbury reports that when Ed-

mund Ironside and Cnut were facing each other in arms at Gloucester, and everything was ready for battle, the Englishman asked the Dane to settle the contest by a single combat, and try their fortune without the destruction of so many faithful adherents. Cnut replied that his courage was great enough, but that he was apprehensive of trusting his diminutive person against so bulky an antagonist. He proposed that they should neither fight each other, nor let their armies come to blows, but divide the kingdom, Edmund taking Wessex, and Cnut taking Mercia. I have some suspicion that the monk of Malmesbury must himself have been rather dwarfish, for he is not only careful to take note of the smallness of size of great kings, but he has an admiration for every appearance of a mighty mind in a little body: he tells at length the story of a Norman knight named Balso, 'of small size, but incredible courage,' who, in a fight outside Pavia, in which more than a thousand men were engaged, was the only survivor on either side. This terrible little warrior 'hovered alone around the city, and by his single sword frightened the citizens as long as he thought proper.' William tells us that St Neot was so dwarfish that he had a step made of iron bars to stand upon while saying mass, in order to be able to reach the altar. It was kept at Glastonbury as a relic in his day. He has also been careful to notice that the mightiest of all the popes, Gregory VII. (Hildebrand), was quite a diminutive man. Another great king of England, who, like Cnut, was of a foreign, although a kindred race, William III., was of notoriously low stature. At the joint coronation of William and Mary, on Saturday, April 11, 1689, the short king and the tall queen walked side by side, not as sovereign and consort, but as joint sovereigns, with the sword between them; and the queer contrast between the figures of the imposing Stuart lady and the meagre little Dutch gentleman, did not escape the satirical observation of the vexed Jacobites.

Of the three great world-wide conquerors whom Napoleon classed together—himself, Alexander of Macedon, and Caesar—he alone was a little man. His predecessors were both of them men of a truly majestic presence, tall of stature. Alexander, indeed, if his portraits are exact, was remarkable for his handsome and manly aspect. Bonaparte was always presented in the English caricatures of him, both pictorial and verbal, as a kind of pigmy. When the vulgar English crowded to his levees as First Consul at the Tuileries in 1802, after the peace of the preceding October, to the disgust of the high-minded Sir Samuel Romilly, they were probably disappointed at not finding him to be a dwarf. 'Bonaparte,' says Miss Berry, in her lively description of one of his receptions, 'by no means struck me as so little as I had heard him represented, and as indeed he appeared on horseback. His shoulders are broad, which gives his figure importance.' Allusions to his stature were not always received by him with complaisance, but there is some humour in a correction which he once administered to one of his imperial grand chamberlains. The Emperor had made several fruitless attempts upon tiptoe to reach a book placed on a high shelf in his cabinet. The official hurrying eagerly to his assistance, said awkwardly: 'Permit me, sire; I am greater than your Majesty' (*Je suis plus grand*

*que votre majesté*). 'Please to say you are longer' (*Dites, donc, plus long*), said Napoleon, with a scornful smile.

An earlier victorious French soldier, whose name is invariably cited as the 'Great Condé,' was a little man; so was his admiring pupil, the Duke of Luxembourg, of whom William of Orange once angrily said: 'I can never beat that little hunchback!' 'How does he know I am a hunchback?' said Luxembourg, on hearing of the exclamation. 'I have often seen his back, but he has never yet seen mine.' The most celebrated of all our naval English heroes, Nelson, was none the less dear for his small size. The first of Russian warriors, the strange Suwarrow, was another of those leaders whose shortness of physical stature seems to be reflected in the short decisiveness of their actions, according to the proverb, 'Little and quick.' Suwarrow said that all his victorious tactics could be compressed into two words, 'Advance; strike.' He was famous, also, for the laconism of his despatches, like many earlier and later commanders of the first rank. Whenever he held a conversation, he studied to express himself with great conciseness. It seems to be a fact, however, that great generals of small size do not always prefer to be followed by small soldiers. Imposing stature has usually been in demand for the rank and file of fighting-men. Marius would not willingly enlist any soldiers that were not six feet high. Mr Carlyle has pictured with vivacity the tall Potsdam regiment of Frederick-William, 'the great drill-sergeant of the Prussian nation.' Aristotle says that the Ethiopians and Indians, in choosing their kings and leaders, had particular regard to the beauty and stature of their persons. Perhaps the Greeks, with whom physical perfection counted for so much, followed the philosopher's great pupil, Alexander, with the more satisfaction for the splendour of his person. In the chapter on Magnanimity and Little-mindedness in his *Ethics*, Aristotle lays it down as a principle, that beauty only exists with good stature; that we may call little persons pretty, but may not call them beautiful. Montaigne says that if a man of goodly stature marches at the head of a battalion, it creates respect in those that follow, and is a terror to the enemy; but it is plain, from the instances already cited, that the lively Perigordin was reasoning *a priori*. It appears, from a slightly querulous bit of self-portraiture in the essay on Pre-sumption, in which he makes this remark, that the essayist himself was somewhat below the middle stature, and keenly felt the insufficiency; he says that his defective size 'carries with it a great deal of inconvenience, for that authority which a graceful presence and a majestic mien beget, is wanting.' It is not impossible that the sense of his bodily littleness was one cause of the eagerness with which he gave himself to study and criticism. Many of the greatest wits and humorists have been but insignificant creatures in appearance; for instance, Voltaire, Quevedo, and Scarron; the last called himself 'an abridgment of human miseries.' Le Sage, who was singularly handsome, and Swift, who was a tall and muscular man, are witnesses that the keenest wit is not confined to a small bodily lodging. Both Dryden and Pope were little men. Rochester nicknamed the former 'Poet Squab,' and Tom Brown always called him 'Little Bayes.' Pope

was only less deformed than Quevedo and Scarron, and was almost a dwarf; his consciousness of his mean appearance made him the more laborious in the cultivation of his talents, according to Shenstone. He was more sensitive and petulant than the first poet of the children, Dr Watts, who was also afflicted, like Pope, with littleness of body, and with lifelong sickness. It is related that when the hymn-writer was one day sitting in a coffee-house, he heard a gentleman say in a low tone: 'That's the great Dr Watts;' while another exclaimed: 'What a little fellow!' Turning to the two speakers, he repeated, with good-humoured seriousness, one of his own verses: it has been called by some who have told the anecdote an impromptu:

Were I so tall to reach the pole,  
Or mete the ocean with my span,  
I must be measured by my soul:  
The mind's the stature of the man.

All biographers who have taken little persons for their subjects, agree in drawing the same moral as Dr Watts. When Calvin arrived at Nerae, and was trying to find the great-hearted Lefèvre, every one of whom he made inquiries gave him the same sort of answer: 'Lefèvre is a little bit of man, but lively as gunpowder.' This Lefèvre was quick to perceive the destiny of the young inquirer, and was the first to prophesy his future importance in the history of religion amongst the French-speaking peoples.

#### MATTERS OF PRECEDENCE.

GENERALLY speaking, writes that somewhat old-fashioned observer of men and manners, the *Spectator*, there is infinitely more to do about place and precedence in a meeting of justices' wives, than in an assembly of duchesses. No one will dispute the truth of this remark. Duchesses are hardly likely to have their rank called in question; it is known to all with whom they are likely to associate, and they are exempt from the perplexities and confusion of a promiscuous drawing-room. 'I have known my friend Sir Roger de Coverley's dinner almost cold,' adds the *Spectator*, 'before the company could adjust the ceremonials of precedence, and be prevailed upon to sit down to table.'

In one of Swift's minor writings, a very pleasant expedient is proposed to the lovers of precedence, for the use of those, he says, who love place without a title to it either by law or heraldry; as some have a strange oiliness of spirit which carries them upwards, and mounts them to the top of all companies (company, adds Swift, being often like bottled liquors, where the light and windy parts hurry to the head, and fix in froth). There is, it seems, a secret way of taking place without sensible precedence, and, consequently, without offence, which this writer proceeds to publish, for the benefit of his countrymen, and the universal improvement of man and woman kind. To quote the witty dean's own words: 'I generally fix a sort of first meridian in my thoughts before I sit down, and instead of observing privately, as the way is,

whom in company I may sit above, in point of birth, age, fortune, I consider only the situation of the table by the points in the compass; and the nearer I can get to the east, I am so much the higher; and my good fortune is, to sit sometimes, or for the most part, due east, sometimes east-by-north, seldom with greater variation; and then I do myself honour, and am blessed with invisible precedence, mystical to others; and the joke is, that by this means I take place (for place is but fancy) of many that sit above me; and while most people in company look upon me as a modest man, I know myself to be a very assuming fellow; and do often look down with contempt on some at the upper end of the table. By this craft, I at once gratify my humour (which is pride), and preserve my character. And to this purpose, my way is, to carry a little pocket-compass in my left fob, and from that I take my measures imperceptibly, as from a watch, in the usual way of comparing time before dinner; or, if I chance to forget that, I consider the situation of the parish church, and this is my never-failing regulator.'

The order of precedence, as it affects the daughters of peers, has something very strange about it. It may not, perhaps, be generally known, that unmarried daughters have always the same rank as their eldest brother during the lifetime of the father, and this independent of the particular title which by courtesy the brother may bear. A duke's eldest son, for instance, ranks as a marquis; consequently, all his sisters, unmarried, have the rank of marchioness, though he himself should be, nominally, but an earl or baron—for the title of marquis being less ancient than the latter, is not the second title of the oldest and highest dukes of the realm. The most curious circumstance is, that the daughters retain this rank if they marry commoners; thus, if a duke has five daughters, four of whom marry peers of the realm below the rank of marquis, and the fifth, and youngest, marry her father's footman, the latter would retain her rank as marchioness, and go before all her elder sisters, though every one of them were peeresses. From an old writer on this subject, we will state a case particularly illustrative of this point. If Lady Frances, the daughter of a duke, marries Lord Francis, the son of a duke, she may either call herself Lady Frances, and retain her rank of marchioness, or call herself Lady Francis, and take place below the viscountesses. But if she chooses to retain her original rank, and her noble husband should be called up to the House of Peers by the title of Baron So-and-so, his lordship would lose one step in the order of precedence, and her ladyship three, by their elevation to the peerage.

Descending somewhat lower in the social scale, we may set down here that it was chronicled in a periodical called *The Inspector*, which appeared about the middle of the last century, that a Lord Mayor's ball was thrown into great confusion by a controversy between a 'watch-spring maker's wife and the wife of a 'watch-case joint-finisher,' as

to which had the right to precede the other. The Lord Mayor was quite incapable of deciding the matter; indeed, it would puzzle the Lord Chamberlain himself to unravel such a knotty point. Had such a case been referred to Frederick the Great, he would probably have settled it, as he is reported to have done, in the matter between the wife of the President of the Court of Justice and the wife of the President of the Chamber of Revenue at Cleves. The former lady insisted upon taking the *pas* of her rival in all places of public resort, until the patience of the latter was quite wearied out, and her pride mortified past all bearing. As a last resource, the wife of the President of the Revenue Chamber wrote to the king himself, desiring that His Majesty would be pleased graciously to interpose his authority, and declare once for all which ought to go first. Frederick was at no loss to satisfy the complainant. His verdict had certainly one great merit of justice—namely, speediness of decision; of the graciousness of it we say nothing. He immediately returned the following laconic answer: 'Let the greatest fool walk first.' It is but fair, however, to the memory of this polished monarch to add, that a similar judgment is said to have been arrived at, some two centuries earlier, by Charles V. of Spain, when he had a like point to adjust between two ladies of fashion at Brussels. It is surprising, says the chronicler of this latter version, how polite these two ladies were to each other ever after, and how scrupulous of taking the lead.

The ladies' indictment of Timothy Treatall, Gent. in Mr Bickerstaff's Court of Honour, for which we refer our readers to No. 262 of the *Tatler*, is much of a piece with the above stories. Mr Treatall's offence was in the great and inextricable confusion he had caused, by desiring a party of ladies to take their places at his supper-table according to their age and seniority.

From the records of Mr Bickerstaff's Court of Honour, another case may be cited, as suggesting a fair and ready means of settling and adjusting any disputed points of ancestry—no very uncommon subject of jealousy. Dathan, a peddling Jew, and T. R., a Welshman, are indicted for having raised a disturbance, by a fierce and angry dispute about the antiquity of their families, the Jew pretending to be son of Meshech, the son of Naboth, the son of Shalem, and so on to the end of the chapter; and the Welshman, John ap Rice, ap Shenkin, ap Shones, &c. The decree of the court was, that they should be both tossed in a blanket, in order to prove, by sensible demonstration, which could go highest, and, as the *Tatler* says, 'to adjust the superiority, as they could not agree on it between themselves.'

The following story, related of George Colman the Younger, is a very neat attempt to settle the question between age and precedence. George IV. when Prince of Wales, met Colman at a party composed of the first wits of the day, and gaily observed that there were two George the Youngers in company; 'but,' continued he, 'I should like to know which is George the youngest.' 'Oh!' replied Colman, 'I could never have had the



rudeness to come into the world before your Royal Highness.'

At the dinners the celebrated Dr Bentley was wont to give at Cambridge, while Master of Trinity College, a gentleman, whom he was often obliged in courtesy to invite, but who was far from being a favourite with the learned doctor, without regard to the rank or consequence of the other guests, invariably pushed himself up to the top of the table, to the right or left, that is, of the doctor himself. The latter was wearied and provoked at last by this presumption, and one day, when he saw that this guest had taken his usual seat, above the rest of the company, Dr Bentley gravely walked to the top of the table, and taking up his own chair, carried it to the bottom, thereby so entirely reversing matters, that he who had striven so earnestly to be first, became literally last.

In Campan's *Memoirs of Marie Antoinette* is a very extraordinary instance to be found of disputed precedence and etiquette. It was the custom at Paris, it seems, under the old régime, when the public were admitted gratis to the theatres, by order of the court, to assign the king's state-box to the charcoal-venders of the city, and the queen's box to the *poissardes*, or fishwomen attending the markets; and, on one occasion, says Madame Campan, their right to occupy those seats was demanded as a fixed point of etiquette, with as much pertinacity as could be observed by nobles, or even sovereign courts. 'Such grave questions of precedence well deserve to be particularised in memoirs of the times. Since the Revolution, neither the charcoal-venders nor the *poissardes* are distinguished in the gratis performances: all ranks are confounded together. It appears to us only just that every one should know his rights, and keep his place.'

All trades and professions have distinct place and precedence with regard to each other, could they only be properly ascertained. That one trade, at anyrate, had settled its own lawful position, would appear from the following extract from a copy of the *Manchester Guardian* of fifty years ago: 'The tailors of Preston have put forth the following notice: To the Public.—The tailors' fraternity of journeymen respectfully present the following notice to the public: that in consequence of the situation which they are to be placed in at the ensuing Guild—a situation which they consider, derogative from the dignity of their sacredly instituted profession, they do not intend to favour the procession with their attendance, except they are permitted to take that situation which the high antiquity of their trade demands—a trade first taught by instinct, and matured in the earliest ages. They are prepared to prove their inalienable right to the first situation, from unquestionable authority; nor did they entertain the most distant idea that the high antiquity of their honourable profession would have been disputed. The only privilege they wish, the only right they require, is to be allowed to move in that situation which has always been assigned to them from the creation of the world to the present time (the last Guild excepted), and they are resolved never to be disgraced by tamely accepting of any other.'

Animals, too, have been supposed to be not insensible to the distinctions of rank and precedence. In an entertaining book (*The Diary of an Invalid*), published early in this century, we read of the

cows in Switzerland having bells of different sizes suspended from their necks, in proportion to their merit; 'and it is said,' adds the author, 'that these animals are so susceptible of feelings similar to our own, that, if the leading cow fall into disgrace, and be deprived of her honours, she exhibits all the mortification of wounded pride and angry jealousy at the promotion of her rival. And the question of precedence excites as much bitterness in the pastures of the Alps, as it can do in the drawing-room of the Tuileries or St James's.'

#### THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A paper is published in the *Monthly Notices* of the Royal Astronomical Society, in which the Earl of Rosse gives an account of a long series of observations of Jupiter, accompanied by coloured lithographs. In these the peculiar features of the Jovial planet are represented with a minuteness of detail surprising to any one accustomed to regard the belts as stripes of uniform colour. It is only by steady perseverance with the great reflecting telescope that Lord Rosse has achieved such remarkable results, for even on the best nights interruptions occur. 'Often for minutes together all the finer details of a brilliant object like Jupiter are mixed up in inextricable confusion, and it is only at more or less widely separated intervals that the confused image suddenly appears to freeze or crystallise into one of great sharpness.' To the assiduity with which these clear moments were taken advantage of, we are indebted for the twenty-one coloured views given with the paper.

Lord Rosse confirms the conclusions of those observers who, within the past two years, have remarked a great loss of colour in the equatorial belt of Jupiter. In 1870 that belt was so red that the colour of the whole planet was affected by it. Since then, it has undergone a change, and now resembles yellow ochre. We trust that Lord Rosse will continue the study of these interesting phenomena.

In the same periodical, Mr Langley of Allegheny Observatory, Pennsylvania, gives an account of his observations of the sun. He acknowledges the value of the spectroscope as an instrument for research, but says there is much in the sun which can be made out by the telescope only. He desires that more observers should betake themselves to the work, for 'the solar clouds are of interest to the terrestrial meteorologist.' It would be important to find out the resemblances and differences, as compared with the clouds of our earth, as a preliminary investigation; and advancing from this, it is possible that 'the foundations of a future science of solar meteorology' might be laid.

Mr Froude, F.R.S.—an eminent authority as regards the shape and behaviour of ships—finds that the best material of which to make models is paraffin. It costs less than wood, can be cast hollow and roughly, of the required form, can be remelted when a new model is wanted, and

there is no loss by shavings and cuttings, for these all go back to the melting-pot. Another advantage is, that paraffin is easily shaped and cut in any direction. The shaping can be done by machinery; consequently, models of ships may be made for purposes of experiment, and afterwards broken up and refashioned as often as is desired. From these particulars, it will be seen that paraffin can be used for models of other things as well as ships.

If a speech or discourse could be made to record itself, there would be economy of time and labour. Mr W. H. Barlow, F.R.S. has invented a little apparatus which shews that this is possible. A mouth-piece is fitted in one side of a small chamber; on the other side is a small delicate drum of goldbeaters' skin; a light steel spring rests on the drum, and is connected with a glass pen. On speaking or whispering into the mouth-piece, the drum is set in vibration, the spring moves in obedience thereto, and the pen records the ups and downs on a strip of paper moved by clockwork. These ups and downs vary with the spoken words, being most marked where consonants prevail; and thus, whatever is uttered by the speaker, is accurately recorded on a continuous strip of paper, and can be read off by any one acquainted with the signs. This is not the first time that an attempt has been made to record the sounds of the voice by mechanical contrivance, and it will not, as yet, supersede the shorthand writer; but uses may be found for Mr Barlow's instrument which its inventor never contemplated.

An Electrical Recorder invented by Messrs Whitehouse and Latimer Clark, is an instrument as likely to be useful as it is ingenious. Its applications are obviously manifold; but for the present it is to record the number of passengers in an omnibus or tramway car. The instrument is fixed in some convenient part of the vehicle; all the seats are in connection therewith, and every passenger by sitting down makes contact and records his presence. The record is a strip of paper on which four pens make a series of lines and marks. The first line counts the minutes spent on the journey; the second line marks the speed and the stoppages; the third line counts the number of inside passengers within each minute of the time line; and the fourth line does the same for the outside passengers. All this goes on, so to speak, of itself; the passengers are unconscious of it; the conductor cannot hinder it, and so at the end of each journey the inspector tears off the strip of paper, and finds thereon an exact account of the number of fares he ought to receive. From this it will be understood that the electrical recorder may help in the cause of morality; for where cheating is impossible, a habit of honesty may be cultivated.

Another invention is an electrical gas regulator, which, as its name indicates, can be used to regulate the flow of gas from the works where it is made into the mains. It can be applied at any point where control of the outflow is required.

—Another is an improved method for lighting and extinguishing gas-burners; it excites a galvanoelectric current with sufficient heat to light any number of oil-lamps, or gas-jets, at the same moment, and at any distance.—Another is 'an improved apparatus for lighting lamps, candles, and similar purposes.'

The latest suggestion with regard to crossing the Channel, is, to excavate under the sea on each side a tunnel two miles long, and at the sea-ward extremity of each, to build a harbour capable of receiving very large vessels, and reached by steps, or a lift, from the tunnel. These vessels would cross from harbour to harbour with ease and rapidity, passengers would land in comfort, and arrive in each country with no other inconvenience than that of passing through two miles of tunnel on each side of the channel.

We mentioned in a recent *Month* the reading of Mr Scott Russell's paper on the great central dome of the Vienna Exhibition building, at a meeting of the Institute of British Architects. Since then, a learned discussion of the paper has taken place, in which reference was made to the enormous span of the roofs of railway stations, the Midland terminus in St Pancras being cited as a case in point. Mr Scott Russell recommended that, when next a large railway station may be wanted, it should be built circular with a domical roof. This plan of construction, he argues, has great advantages; and if greater length than width were required, then 'all that the builders have to do is, to put two circular roofs alongside one another, and the two will be much stronger than one oval roof equal to the area of the two.' Are the architects sufficiently bold and enterprising to carry out this novel suggestion?

At a recent meeting of the Society of Telegraph Engineers, the rapid decay of telegraph poles was talked about. No perfectly effectual method of checking the decay has yet been discovered; and there is a good opportunity for some very clever chemist to invent a way to keep wood sound for ever. Of European woods, red deal 'stands' the best; but there are two kinds of wood in the forests of South America, called urunday and curupay, which have by nature the requisite durability; for, building-timbers cut from those trees, and fixed in the ground, have been shewn to be quite hard and sound when dug up after two hundred years.

Mr J. R. Napier, F.R.S. of Glasgow, has published a pamphlet 'On the Economy of Fuel in Domestic Arrangements,' in which he shews how great is the waste of fuel in ordinary fireplaces, and how to prevent the waste. He shews, too, in a clear and forcible way that disease is occasioned and life shortened by the use of gas in dwelling-houses; and by means of diagrams, points out a way to get rid of the deleterious atmosphere. Complaints are often made that people catch cold by passing from a hot room to the cold air outside; but the reverse is the fact: the cold is caught by

going into the heated room, and breathing its poisoned atmosphere. It is possible, as Mr Napier's pamphlet sets forth, so to plan fireplaces and lights that the air shall be pure inside the house as well as outside; and the truth cannot be too often repeated, that without pure air healthy existence is impossible.

Mr Silber has succeeded in improving gas-burners as well as lamps, and his improvements may be seen in the College of Chemistry at Kensington, where four cubic feet of gas with the new burner give more light than five feet with the old burner. Another advantage is, that the air is not vitiated, as it is with the ordinary burners.

Borings for coal have for some months been carried on in North Staffordshire beyond the outer edge of the long known coal-basin, and with success; and it is now certain that good workable coal can be got in a wide tract of country in which, as hitherto supposed, no coal could be found.

Mr Loiseau of Philadelphia has invented a machine which, with the help of two men, will produce one hundred and fifty tons of artificial fuel in a day. The materials are ninety-five per cent. of coal-dust with five per cent. of clay, sprinkled during the mixing with milk of lime. The pasty mass is then moulded into egg-shaped lumps; these are dried on belts of wire-gauze, are dipped into a solution of resin and benzine, to render them damp-proof, and are ready for the market. In this way, it is hoped a means of utilising the prodigious heaps of coal-dust at the Pennsylvania mines has been discovered.

By some naturalists, certain kinds of insects are described as having a power of communicating with one another—ants, bees, and wasps, for example. Often has the statement been made, that if one bee discovers a store of honey, the fact is soon known to others. Sir John Lubbock has, by careful observation, tested these conclusions, and has laid the results before the Linnæan Society. He introduced a bee to a small store of honey laid up in a secret place, and watched for consequences, and repeated the experiment many times with other bees, but with negative results only. He next tried with one of Marriott's observatory hives, but very few of the bees discovered the honey for themselves; and Sir John concludes, that 'even if bees and wasps have the power of informing one another when they discover a store of good food, at anyrate they do not habitually do so.' From other experiments, he is led to doubt the proposition that bees are attacked if they enter a strange hive. Then with regard to the antennæ, which some entomologists look upon as hearing organs, Sir John has tried in many ways, and with different sounds, but has failed to discover the slightest sign of hearing in bees. But he has discovered evidence which seems to shew 'that bees have the power of distinguishing colour.'

The increasing use of electricity in medical practice is worth notice. Toothache can now be cured by a current of electricity ingeniously applied to the seat of the pain. The instrument employed is delicate, and specially contrived for the purpose. Chilblains also are speedily cured, if treated by electricity.

Recent experiments have demonstrated that amputation of soft parts of the body can be effected by an india-rubber ligature worn tightly round the

part to be removed. The pain is but slight, and in eight or nine days the diseased portion is cut away by the mere pressure of the ligature.

A case is recorded in a New York medical journal of the destruction of one hemisphere of the brain without disturbance of the vital functions of the patient. This has a bearing on Dr Ferrier's experiments, recently noticed in these pages. Those experiments are to be continued and extended; and it is anticipated that they will lead to an important result—namely, to shew that operations on the brain are possible. Deaths occur from tumours in the brain. If a hole were bored in the skull, and the tumour extracted, the patient might live. It is an operation that succeeds with sheep; for in some northern counties, it has long been the practice to bore a hole in the skull of a sheep suffering from 'staggers,' to extract the hydatids which occasion the malady, and so effect a cure. The value of Dr Ferrier's experiments will be largely increased if he succeeds in demonstrating that pain can be relieved, or life saved, by an operation on the brain.

The year 1873 has often been spoken of as wet and disagreeable; but meteorologists give it a different character, and it appears from rain-gauge observations laid before the Philosophical Society of Manchester, that the rainfall of 1873 was about twelve per cent. below the average. The summer months were very showery; and, as people naturally expect fine weather in the summer, their disappointment may have led to the impression that the whole year was wet. The preceding year (1872) was the wet year, at least in Lancashire, for the rainfall was thirty-six per cent. above the average. Popular feeling thus appears to be as much at fault with regard to the weather, as it not unfrequently is on social topics. Taking the observations of a series of years, we find confirmation of the statement, that in England we have more fine nights than fine days, for it is shewn that the day rainfall is greater than the night rainfall.

## ODDS AND ENDS:

FROM DR ROBERT CHAMBERS'S SCRAP-BOOK.

STORY OF A FOUNDLING.—(Feb. 9, 1845.) Miss Edmondstone, a lady of ninety, relates a curious story of a foundling. About eighty years ago, Mr Gordon of Ardoch, in Aberdeenshire—a tall castle situated upon a rock overlooking the sea—was one stormy night alarmed by the firing of a gun, apparently from a distressed vessel. Collecting his dependents, and furnishing himself with lights and ropes, he hurried down to the beach amidst the peltings of one of the severest storms he had any recollection of. On arriving there, he and his people could discern no ship; they saw no light; they heard no cry. But, searching about, they found an infant lying in a kind of floating crib or cradle, as if it had been brought ashore from a perished vessel by the force of the winds and the waves. The young stranger was removed to the castle, and taken care of; and in the morning there were indubitable signs of a shipwreck on the beach, but no other person seemed to have got ashore.

Mr Gordon, unable to trace the history of the infant (it was a female), brought her up with his own daughters, and became as much attached to her as to any of his children. The foundling received, in all respects, the same treatment and the same education as the young ladies with whom she was associated, and in time she grew to woman's estate. About that time, a similar storm occurred. Mr Gordon hurried as usual to the shore; but this time was so happy as to receive a shipwrecked party, among whom was a gentleman passenger. After a comfortable night spent in the castle, this stranger was next morning surprised by the entrance of the young ladies, upon one of whom he fixed a gaze of the greatest interest.

'Is this your daughter too?' said he to his kind host. 'No,' said Mr Gordon; 'but she is as dear to me as if she were.' And then he related the story of the former storm, and of the discovery of the infant upon the beach. At the conclusion, the stranger said with much emotion that he had all reason to believe that the young lady was his own niece. He then stated the circumstances of a sister's return from India, corresponding to the time of the shipwreck; and explained how it might happen that Mr Gordon's inquiries for the parents of the child had failed. 'She is now,' he said, 'an orphan; but her father has left her the bulk of his fortune, to be bestowed upon her, if she should ever be found.'

All these things being fully substantiated by the stranger, it became necessary that the young lady should leave Ardoch, to put herself under the care of a new protector; but this was a bitter trial, and she could at last be reconciled to quit Ardoch only on the condition, that one of her friends, the daughters of Mr Gordon, should accompany her. This was consented to; and the whole party soon after left Scotland to proceed to Göttenburg, in Sweden, where her uncle carried on a large mercantile concern.

There is no further romance in the tale as far as the young lady was concerned; for fact does not always go as fiction would. But a curious circumstance resulted, nevertheless, from the shipwreck. Miss Gordon was wooed and won at Göttenburg by a young Scottish merchant named Erskine, a son of Erskine of Cambo in Fife—a youth of narrow fortunes, and *seventeen* persons between him and the title and estates of the Earl of Kelly. The seventeen died, and this young man became an earl. More than this, a sister of Miss Gordon was, through the same connection of circumstances, married to a younger brother of the former, who succeeded to this title. Thus, through the accident of the shipwreck, two daughters of an Aberdeenshire laird became Countesses of Kelly. Unfortunately, neither had any children; so that the title has reverted to the Earl of Mar, the representative of the family of which that of Kelly was a branch. [Since the preceding was written, the earldoms of Mar and

Kelly have been disjoined, in consequence of the Earl of Mar and Kelly having died without issue, 1866, when the earldom of Mar passed to heirs-general, and the earldom of Kelly to heirs-male.]

#### THE WILD BEE.

I COME at morn, when dewdrops bright  
Are twinkling on the grasses,  
And woo the balmy breeze in flight  
That o'er the heather passes.

I swarm with many lithesome wings,  
That join me, through my ramble,  
In seeking for the honeyed things  
Of heath and hawthorn bramble.

And languidly amidst the sedge,  
When noontide is most stilly,  
I loil beside the water's edge,  
And climb into the lily.

I fly throughout the clover crops  
Before the evening closes,  
Or swoon amid the amber drops  
That swell the pink moss-roses.

At times I take a longer route,  
In cooling autumn weather,  
And gently murmur round about  
The purple-tinted heather.

To Poesy I am a friend;  
I go with Fancy linking,  
And all my airy knowledge lend,  
To aid him in his thinking.

Deem not these little eyes are dim  
To every sense of duty;  
We owe a certain debt to him  
Who clad this earth in beauty.

And therefore I am never sad,  
A burden homeward bringing,  
But help to make the summer glad  
In my own way of singing.

When idlers seek my honeyed wine,  
In wantonness to drink it,  
I sparkle from the columbine,  
Like some forbidden trinket;

But never sting a friend—not one—  
It is a sweet delusion,  
That I may look at children run,  
And smile at their confusion.

If I were man, with all his tact  
And power of foreseeing,  
I would not do a single act  
To hurt a human being.

And thus my little life is fixed,  
Till tranquilly it closes,  
For wisely have I chosen 'twixt  
The thorns and the roses.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by all Booksellers.